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Future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/260, the present report gives updated information on the progress achieved in the revitalization of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). The Institute made a number of inputs to the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In particular, it highlighted women's economic and social contributions to development in the areas of migration and remittances. During the period under review, INSTRAW also pursued activities in the area of women and peace in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Its research activities were extended to many regions of the world while its communication, outreach and training activities were further enhanced. The full implementation and success of the Institute's programmes and its ability to fulfil its mandate and sustain its activities could be jeopardized in 2006 if Member States do not increase or resume their voluntary contributions.

* Submission of the present report was delayed in order to incorporate updated information.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 59/260, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the resolution. By its resolution, the Assembly also decided that all projects of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) should be fully implemented in order to strengthen the Institute, thus enabling it to carry out its mandate effectively.

II. Second session of the Executive Board of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

2. The Executive Board of INSTRAW held its second session at Headquarters on 1 June 2005. The agenda of the session included a review of the implementation of the programme of work during the period from October 2004 to May 2005; the presentation of the proposed work plan and operational budget for 2006; and consideration of matters related to fund-raising activities.

3. The Executive Board took note of the report of the INSTRAW Director on the implementation of the programme of work for the period from October 2004 to May 2005 and expressed its satisfaction with the results achieved by the Institute to date. It also approved the proposed workplan, endorsed the operational budget for 2006 and agreed to consider possible recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly regarding financial support for the Institute. The Board agreed on the importance of seeking medium-term sustainable financial resources for INSTRAW and requested the Director of the Institute, in consultation with the Secretariat and the President of the Board, to prepare a detailed report, including actions that could be taken by the Board and proposals for alternative mechanisms for fund-raising activities. The Board decided to hold a resumed second session in October 2005 to analyse in greater detail the above-mentioned proposal aimed at achieving the medium- and long-term financial viability of the Institute and consider further steps to be taken in that regard, including the submission of the proposals to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

III. Implementation of resolution 59/260

A. Beijing+10 review process

4. In compliance with resolution 59/260, paragraph 4, in which the Assembly requested the Institute, in accordance with its mandate, to actively participate and contribute to the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in the context of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Institute prepared a series of overview reports covering each of the 12 critical areas of the Platform for Action. The reports were prepared with two objectives in mind: (a) to highlight successful experiences, or best practices, for addressing gender equality issues at the local, national and

international levels; and (b) to identify priority areas for future action. The reports are available in English, French and Spanish on the Institute's website. They were also widely disseminated, as a CD-ROM in English, French and Spanish, to delegations, representatives of international organizations and civil society during the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which conducted the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in 2000. The CD-ROM was the main feature of an INSTRAW exhibit, organized during the session of the Commission.

5. INSTRAW and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) co-sponsored with the Mexican Senate, and with the participation of the Chamber of Deputies, Government officials and civil society, a workshop to establish a mechanism to follow-up on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and other international agreements relating to gender equality.

6. Following up the Beijing+10 review and appraisal, INSTRAW, in cooperation with the Ministry for Women's Affairs of the Dominican Republic, organized a workshop in late August 2005 to review and assess national implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The workshop included the participation of Dominican parliamentarians, Government officials, civil society leaders and representatives of other United Nations organizations in the country. The workshop also linked the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Project.

B. Implementation of the workplan and operational budget for 2005

7. In paragraph 5 of the same resolution, the General Assembly requested that the Institute, when formulating future programmes and projects, take into account the particular challenges facing women in developing and least developed countries in the different regions. In that spirit, INSTRAW prepared and implemented the work programme for 2005 approved by its Executive Board at its resumed first session, held on 1 October 2004. The four priority strategic areas were: (a) migration-related issues (remittances, trafficking); (b) information and communication technologies and women's empowerment; (c) security and gender; and (d) women's political participation.

8. Each area included policy-oriented applied research, capacity-building, and information and communication activities. The activities inside these areas were developed with core and extrabudgetary funds.

1. Migration-related issues (remittances and trafficking)

9. Remittances are an increasingly significant source of foreign currency, national income and financing of imports, and a contribution to the balance of payments. They also reduce poverty, lower internal migration, increase women's employment and investment and create local demand for goods and services. INSTRAW has finalized the development of a research framework for gender

analysis on remittances, as well as on their impact on household and gender relations.

10. Despite the increasing number of migrant women workers and the growing importance of remittances for national economies and the economic well-being of many families in developing countries, little systematic research has been conducted on the gender dimensions of remittances. A critical review of the flows and impact of remittances from a gender perspective could facilitate the implementation of programmes aimed at harnessing the development potential of remittances. The INSTRAW research framework addresses issues such as traditional forms of inheritance; access to credit; limitations on property ownership; use, control and distribution of resources within the household; the sexual division of labour; and decision-making within households and communities.

11. The framework was published for presentation during a seminar on gender and remittances, organized in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank and held on 30 June 2005, during the International Forum on Remittances (28-30 June 2005, Washington, D.C.). During the session, INSTRAW was joined by renowned academic experts on gendered economic and cultural changes produced by migration; United Nations representatives, including the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean; and representatives of Governments and civil society.

12. Currently, INSTRAW is developing a methodology for conducting case studies in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, the Philippines and various countries in Africa and Eastern Europe. The studies will be conducted in partnership with United Nations organizations to highlight the economic contribution of women to their countries of origin, as well as to identify policies, programmes and guidelines for empowering women in decision-making processes and enhancing local development through the inclusion of women's needs and priorities.

2. Security and gender

13. In 2004, INSTRAW undertook several activities in line with the upcoming review by the Security Council of the implementation of its resolution 1325 (2000), entitled "Women, peace and security". Two e-discussions were held on the themes "Gender and security sector reform" and "Gender and conflict prevention/conflict resolution". The majority of participants agreed that the definition of security needed to be broadened and that women's and gender issues were lacking in current security sector reform and conflict prevention and resolution initiatives. Participants from both discussions identified research and capacity-building as priorities and stressed the need to integrate gender issues into security sector reform assessments. In response to positive feedback from the participants and their expressed desire to continue discussions on those subjects, INSTRAW has set up a gender and security sector reform network. Summaries of the discussion are available on the Institute's website.

14. As part of the Institute's research programme on gender, peace and security issues, a new website section available in English, French and Spanish, has been developed on gender and security sector reform. The section contains background information and an annotated bibliography of information resources and

international agreements, a fact sheet and a listing of events and organizations related to the topic.

15. In addition, the Institute, in partnership with the World Food Programme, has developed a project proposal on improving the human security of vulnerable Haitian women in the Dominican Republic. The project is aimed at increasing knowledge regarding Haitian women in the Dominican Republic in order to: (a) orient future policy, research and projects; (b) improve the living standards of Haitian women in the Dominican Republic through capacity-building and training in HIV/AIDS and other health issues, nutrition, civil rights, employment and physical security; and (c) reduce Haitian women's insecurity through increased awareness and knowledge. The project proposal is currently being discussed with potential partners.

16. In the context of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, INSTRAW makes an ongoing gender-related contribution to a network created to monitor the efforts to reduce the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

17. As part of its efforts to enhance capacity-building, INSTRAW is reviewing a training package on public security developed by a Subregional Resource Facility of the United Nations Development Programme in order to integrate gender aspects. As part of the package, INSTRAW will develop a specific tool and a training module on the prevention of violence against women as a key element in public security.

3. Women's political participation

18. The Institute is in the process of negotiating extrabudgetary funding with the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation to fund a three-year project devised to strengthening governance with a gender focus and the participation of women at the local level. The project is aimed at building a knowledge base on the gender aspects of governance and political, economic and social inclusion of indigenous populations, to favour the exchange of good practices and lessons learned, and to strengthen local and/or national knowledge and capacity to improve women's political participation and leadership at the local level.

19. As the project has a special emphasis on indigenous populations in Central American and Andean countries, in early 2005, INSTRAW met with ministers responsible for women's and gender affairs from those countries to seek their views on the project. Representatives of academic institutions and the United Nations system were invited to participate in the meeting. The initiative was welcomed by ministers as an opportunity to enhance regional cooperation at the ministerial level. They also welcomed its emphasis on strengthening women's participation in leadership and the management of resources at the local level.

20. INSTRAW has finalized an annotated bibliography on women's political participation in local governance in Latin America, which is available on the Institute's website.

21. A new project proposal on women's political participation at the local level in the Maghreb region was developed and was presented to potential donors. The project is aimed at contributing to the promotion of women's rights, gender equality and women's political participation and leadership in the planning and administration of local governments in that region.

22. A special section of the website is currently being prepared and will include a variety of resources on gender and governance, and women's political participation. The section was to be available by late August 2005.

23. In order to create a space for new voices on gender equality from academia, policymakers and practitioners, in March 2005, INSTRAW launched a new paper series entitled *New Voices, New Perspectives*. Directed towards post-graduate students worldwide, the paper series will provide an opportunity for students enrolled in gender-related programmes to contribute to global, national and local debates on women's and gender issues. Papers have been invited on four priority research areas: gender and remittances; gender and information and communication technologies; gender and security sector reform; and gender and political participation at the local level. Twelve papers will be selected and published online in their original language (English, French or Spanish). Three outstanding papers will be selected for printing and their authors invited to participate at an academic event relating to the paper's theme.

24. A study entitled "The United Nations and equal opportunities between men and women" was published by INSTRAW in its original language (Spanish), and is also available online at the Institute's website. The study presents an overview of gender issues in the United Nations throughout its history.

4. Capacity-building and information

25. In response to the demonstrated demand for training materials, in particular from organizations in less developed countries, INSTRAW expanded its collection of gender training materials to include additional information, such as a mapping of existing programmes, materials and tools; a roster of training institutes and centres; and the identification of gaps and needs. Information was first made available online in June 2005, though activities will continue throughout the year.

26. The database of resources on gender mainstreaming was redesigned in order to make it more user-friendly. Approximately 300 new resources were added. The database features resources on issues of importance to less developed countries, such as water, agricultural and rural development, and health and HIV/AIDS.

27. With funds from a contribution received from the Government of South Africa earmarked for a project on HIV/AIDS and gender in Southern Africa, INSTRAW has produced a manual for home-based caregivers, the majority of whom are illiterate and semi-illiterate women in poverty-stricken areas. The main objective of the manual is to provide family caregivers with a tool adapted to their circumstances and specific needs that will increase their technical skills in order to improve the home-based care of people living with HIV/AIDS. The manual will be piloted in Zimbabwe by the researchers of a joint project of Stanford University and Zimbabwe University on women and HIV/AIDS. The manual was submitted to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and will be distributed in the field as part of the testing process. Other countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mozambique, have shown interest in adapting the manual to their specific contexts.

28. In support of national activities for capacity-building in the Dominican Republic, in April 2005, INSTRAW staff participated in a week-long workshop entitled "Project development with a gender perspective" funded by the World

Health Organization (WHO)/Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). The workshop brought together representatives of national governmental institutions and United Nations agencies based in the Dominican Republic.

29. As part of its capacity-building programme in the Dominican Republic, INSTRAW has also initiated a series of workshops on a variety of issues, including women and youth, migration and ageing.

30. The Institute's website has been enriched by *INSTRAW Review*, a periodic magazine including opinion pieces, interviews and relevant news items on gender issues worldwide. The *Review* is published online in English, French and Spanish, and distributed to various mailing lists. Past issues have focused on violence against women, gender and the Millennium Development Goals, and gender, peace and security. An upcoming issue will focus on gender and energy.

5. Institutional development

31. Considerable progress has been made in the past year to reposition INSTRAW and re-establish its credibility. In this regard, the Institute continued efforts to strengthen partnerships between INSTRAW and other organizations of the United Nations system and raise the level of cooperation with Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector in various countries.

32. Recently, INSTRAW and UNIFEM jointly organized a meeting entitled "Gender information in the Americas" (New York, 26 and 27 May 2005), at which information officers from United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations gathered to discuss the availability and dissemination of gender information. Participants also identified the gaps and challenges in collecting and disseminating gender information and developed a common strategy to overcome those challenges. Although the meeting addressed the situation prevailing in only one region, its participants agreed that the lessons learned at the meeting were applicable to other regions of the world.

33. Among other partnerships, INSTRAW intends to collaborate with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in a number of areas. One area would entail joint projects to design and develop a series of online courses on a wide range of themes, such as gender and information and communication technologies, gender and HIV/AIDS, trafficking of women, and gender and peace. Another area for collaboration with UNESCO concerns the establishment of a Palestinian women's resource centre to serve as a clearinghouse on information related to Palestinian women's issues.

34. The Institute is also working with UNFPA and WHO on an overview document on gender, ageing and health, intended as a follow-up to the Beijing+10 review and appraisal process. In this connection, the Institute participated in a meeting held in New York, from 28 February to 1 March 2005 to prepare the first draft of the document for further review and fine-tuning through e-mail correspondence. The final document will be issued in October 2005.

35. The Institute participated at a meeting of the PAHO Subcommittee on Women, Health and Development held in Washington, D.C., on 15 and 16 March 2005. INSTRAW made a presentation entitled "Missing links: gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals". The presentation pointed out that the Goals, as a powerful tool for generating consensus on international development, had the

potential to further the cause of gender equality and the empowerment of women if each of the Goals took into account women's specific needs and priorities: for example, though the elimination of violence against women is crucial for the achievement of gender equality, violence against women was not reflected in the Goals. In conclusion, the presentation affirmed that the Goals were a practical starting point for the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action, which in turn, contain perspectives and actions essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

36. INSTRAW collaborated with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women/Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other organizations on a number of other initiatives, including the task force for the Secretary-General's study on violence against women, and the gender and development section of Development Gateway, in which INSTRAW is now a "cooperating organization".

37. In other areas, INSTRAW continued to cooperate with the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance. It also became a member of the UN-Energy network, participated in two meetings organized by the United Nations on energy held in Washington, D.C. and New York, and took part in online discussions and videoconferences for the preparation of an overview document on energy and the Millennium Development Goals that was launched on 22 July 2005. As a result of those efforts, the final text better reflected gender aspects and women's concerns.

38. The Institute has been an active participant in the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, and has joined the specific task forces on gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals; gender and information and communication technologies; women, peace and security; WomenWatch; gender and water; and indigenous women.

39. The Institute also participated on a regular basis in inter-agency meetings of the United Nations system in the Dominican Republic, including meetings of the thematic groups on gender issues and HIV/AIDS. It provided consultative and technical support on gender issues to Dominican national institutions in connection with the Millennium Project.

IV. Resource situation and support for the revitalization process

40. On the basis of the decision of the Fifth Committee contained in its report A/59/641, the General Assembly decided, by its resolution 59/276, section XIII, to appropriate $1,092,400 for future operation of INSTRAW against the contingency fund, to be used in the event of a shortage of voluntary contributions for the functioning of the Institute in 2005. The same decision called for a report of the Secretary-General to the Assembly as a matter of priority early during the main part of its sixtieth session on the overall financial situation of the Institute. Accordingly, the financial situation of INSTRAW will be discussed in detail in that report.

41. In order to provide for uninterrupted operations of the Institute during the first six months of 2005, the amount of $546,200 (representing 50 per cent of the subvention of $1,092,400, approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/276) was transferred to the INSTRAW Trust Fund at the end of December 2004.

42. In accordance with the Institute's programme of activities envisaged for 2005, the Director continued implementation of the fund-raising strategy initiated in 2004 aimed at increasing financial support for both INSTRAW core activities and extrabudgetary projects. As a result, contributions received by the Institute for the period 1 January to 31 August 2005 amounted to $691,295, including a major contribution of $604,400 received from the Government of Italy on 15 August 2005, the largest voluntary contribution received by INSTRAW since 1997 ($824,000). Additional outstanding pledges made for 2005 amount to $58,120, bringing the total level of INSTRAW projected income for the current year to $762,758.

43. The Institute has developed 16 project proposals and 10 project profiles amounting to a total of $21,613,615. The projects and profiles are under discussion with potential donors for funding. Several donors have already expressed their interest in lending their support to the Institute. The host country continued to provide support in sustaining INSTRAW.

44. The voluntary contributions by Member States to the INSTRAW Trust Fund, recorded to date in 2005, indicate that INSTRAW should be in a position to fund its operations for the period from September to December 2005 without utilizing the second part of the subvention.

V. Conclusion

45. **The implementation of the INSTRAW strategic framework 2004-2007 and its programme of work for 2005 based on specific thematic areas (gender, migration and remittances; women's political participation at the local level; and gender and security sector reform) are making a contribution to programmes that benefit women in developing countries. At the same time, a two-pronged strategy used by INSTRAW to strengthen its research and training capacities as part of its core activities and to develop a comprehensive project portfolio for extrabudgetary funding provided the necessary flexibility and increased efficiency of fund-raising efforts.**

46. **During the period under review, INSTRAW made a number of inputs to the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In particular, it highlighted women's economic and social contributions to development in the areas of migration and remittances. It pursued programmes in the area of women and peace in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). INSTRAW was also expanding its research to different regions of the world and had enhanced its communication, outreach and training activities.**

47. **Although in the period under review the Institute enjoyed greater financial support from Member States, the United Nations system and civil society, the full implementation and success of the Institute's programmes and its ability to fulfil its mandate and sustain its activities in 2006 will be contingent on Member States providing the required level of resources.**